



# Vendor Update

## A Publication of the Maryland WIC Program

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Family Health Administration

October 1, 2002 Volume 2 Issue 4

### Revised Vendor Regulations in Effect

Revised Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) covering the WIC Program are effective October 1, 2002. These federally mandated changes are designed to increase program accountability and efficiency in food delivery and related areas, and decrease vendor violations of program requirements and loss of program funds. Some of the revisions are highlighted below:

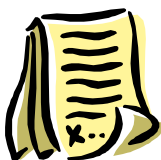


- *Changing the methodology for maximum reimbursement from Regional Average to Peer Group Average.*
- *All sanctions with six month suspensions have increased to 1 year.*
- *Sanction for providing credit and non-food items has increased from a 1 year suspension to 3 years.*
- *Permanent disqualification for conviction in a criminal court stemming from violations.*
- *Sanctions imposed by the Food Stamp Program will be imposed by the WIC Program in turn.*

If you have any questions, please contact James A. Butler at 410-767-5258.

### 3-Year Vendor Agreements

The USDA WIC regulation changes also require Vendor Agreements to be no longer than 3 years. Three-year



agreements were initiated earlier this year with new vendors. Current authorized vendors who

do not have 3-year Agreements will be phased into new agreements of that length. In order to accomplish this, vendors will be offered one year, two year or three year agreements depending on their location. By federal regulation these agreements will be new agreements and not continuations of current agreements. Vendors must, therefore, meet all selection criteria including the minimum stock requirements where applicable. If you have any questions, contact JoAnn McGowen at 410-767-5251.

### Processing New WIC Checks

With the conversion to WIC WINS, juice/cereal and formula are now prescribed on separate checks. There have been incidents of cashiers writing the formula purchase on the juice/cereal check and the juice/cereal purchase amount on the formula check. This results in the juice/cereal check being rejected by our bank as "Exceeding the Maximum Amount Payable". Please be sure your cashiers carefully match WIC checks with the items being purchased and write the correct purchase amount on the applicable check. Each WIC check constitutes a separate transaction. **Checks rejected by our bank as "Exceeding the Maximum Amount Payable" because of cashier error under this scenario will not be paid by the WIC Program.** This matter will be reinforced at WIC Program cashier training sessions.



If you have any questions during normal business hours, please contact your local WIC agency, or James A. Butler at 410-767-5258.



## **Cashier Training**

The following cashier training dates are available through the end of the year:

Allegany County	December 9
Baltimore County	November 13
Dorchester County	November 15
Carroll County	November 4
Montgomery County	December 11
Prince George's County	November 14
Queen Anne's County	November 20
Washington County	November 22
Wicomico County	November 20
Baltimore City	November 4
Johns Hopkins WIC (Baltimore City)	December 11

**Pre-registration is required for all attendees. Contact Ms. Frances McRae-Washington at 410-767-5433 at least 5 days in advance.**

## **Annual Vendor Training**

Annual vendor training will be conducted from October 11, 2002 through November 14, 2002. **All authorized WIC vendors are required to attend one of these sessions.** Organizations owning/operating more than one WIC authorized store can, at their option, choose to send one representative for all of their stores. Attendance at one of the training sessions is required to maintain your WIC authorization. A detailed schedule of training dates and locations has been mailed to all vendors. For questions regarding annual vendor training, please contact Ms. Frances McRae-Washington at 410-767-5433.



## **WIC WINS Update**

Implementation of WIC WINS, the Maryland WIC Program's new computer system, is now complete. Please remember that you may still see the old check design in areas where WIC WINS is newly installed. You may also see Manual Checks. If you have questions about a WIC check, please contact the Office of the Maryland WIC Program at 410-767-5258 during regular business hours or 1-800-242-4942.



## **Moving or Selling Your Store?**

If you are moving or selling your store please notify the Maryland WIC Program at least 15 days in advance. **Selling your store does not transfer your WIC authorization!** The new owner must apply to the Maryland WIC Program for authorization. You are also required to return your WIC vendor stamps to the Maryland WIC Program. If you have questions, or plan to sell or relocate your store, please contact JoAnn McGowen at 410-767-5251.



## **Vendor Feedback**

We want to make your participation in the WIC Program a rewarding experience. **WE NEED YOU!** Your input is valued and strongly encouraged. If you have suggestions or comments, please feel free to contact James A. Butler at 410-767-5258.



**USDA prohibits discrimination in the administration of its programs.**